Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Commentary Views U.S. 'Double Moral Standard'

PA2501025991 Havana International Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 24 Jan 91

["Our America" commentary read by Manolo Ortega]

[Text] The U.S. armed intervention in Iraq destabilizes not just the attacked country and the Persian Gulf region. The warmongering actions already have the potential of destabilizing the entire Middle East and the world by pushing it to the edge of the abyss of war.

It is curious to see that in this case—just as when troops and warplanes intervened in Panama—the ones who have shot first are those who do it on behalf of peace, appeal to sacred principles, and criticize invasions and interventions.

Regardless of the Iraqi position, the U.S. Government is hardly the government to talk against invasions—which cannot be countered with yet another invasion. With this in mind, we want to state that the double moral standard currently being widely discussed is the only principle that guides the actions of the White House, regardless of who the current president may be.

There will never be a correct term to define the barbaric warmongering actions unleashed a few days ago in the distant, and at the same time not-so-distant, Persian Gulf, and the consequences of war, which also came to Panama City during the early morning hours of 20 December 1989 when bombs were dropped on the poorest city neighborhoods. Shortly afterwards, the hated troops in combat uniforms began their occupation as the Panamanian people wept over the loss of loved ones and cried before their destroyed homes.

What moral standards and on behalf of what principles can a superpower put the entire world on the verge of death? What kind of peace is the U.S. President vowing to defend? It is possibly the peace of tombs. However, one can rest assured that no people want that kind of peace, because it is a time to build cities and homes for the homeless and sow the land—in sum, it is time to live a better life.

The U.S. Administration had prepared to take military action in Panama long before it was taken, and had even decided to undertake it. This is perhaps the most reprehensible action. This destroys everything that the U.S. head of state has always said with regard to peace and international detente. He says that he is looking for peace, but at the same time is sending troops, carriers, and the most modern weapons from his arsenal to make others aware of the enormous military might that threatens them and will inevitably fall upon them.

The cost of innocent lives of the U.S. intervention in Panama demonstrated that the objective was very far from what President George Bush called dialogue and multilateral diplomacy. The bombs that were dropped were proof of this.

If a peaceful solution is ultimately found in the Persian Gulf, the war should become a painful lesson for those who still believe the hypocritical words of a two-faced president.

Latin America, our America as Jose Marti [Cuban founding father] called it, is an area very close to the ambitions of the modern empire. Now more than ever, we should all be alert.

Commentary on Current Trade Ties With USSR

PA2401194191 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Roberto Morejon commentary: "The Ties Between Cuba and the USSR"]

[Text] The agreements signed in December between Cuba and the USSR regulated trade between the two countries at a time when the Western harbingers of doom predicted the imminent end to bilateral relations. Representatives of both countries recently revealed to reporters some basic aspects of the five agreements that will regulate trade relations and cooperation between Cuba and the USSR this year. The explanations clarify some speculations as to the scope of the agreements, ratify the will of the Soviet authorities to maintain their friendship with Cuba, and prove the constructive nature of the recent bilateral talks.

Cuban Foreign Trade Minister Ricardo Cabrisas and Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Yuriy Petrov have confirmed to reporters the complexity of the process that ended with the signing of the agreements. It is clear that changes in the USSR's economic mechanisms—because of its adoption of the market system, the tense international situation, and Cuban economic difficulties—have created a new framework for Cuban-Soviet relations. Therefore, bilateral trade must suffer changes. For Cuba, however, it is essential to ensure a supply of essential products from the USSR because it is our main trading partner.

The USSR has guaranteed the deliveries of fuel, raw materials, equipment, and spare parts for 1991, although in smaller amounts than before. Cuba, which has managed to maintain the preferential price of its sugar—although it is lower than in the past five years—will send the USSR its traditional products, including sugar [two-minute break in reception] agreements with the USSR permit the arrival in Cuba of an important part of the traditional Soviet products. However, this does not mean the local economy will be able to overcome the period of austerity it is currently experiencing.

Scientific Cooperation Meeting With Brazil Opens

FL2401213791 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2035 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The first session of the Cuba-Brazil Joint Commission for Scientific-Technical and Technological Cooperation began in Havana today with negotiations in the fields of health, agriculture, basic industry, transportation, biotechnology, higher education, and fishery. The Cuban delegation is presided over by Raul Taladrid, vice president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation, and the Brazilian one by (Antonio F. Crus de Mello), assistant executive director of the International Cooperation Agency of Brazil attached to its Foreign Ministry.

During the opening remarks, Taladrid noted he was honored in being able to welcome (Crus de Mello) and the group of experts and officials who are accompanying him to the meeting. The head of the Brazilian delegation said: We are now beginning to establish basic points for cooperation. The talks will continue until 29 January when the agreements are signed.

Council Names Carlos Amat New Justice Minister

PA2401164591 Havana International Service in Spanish 1400 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The Cuban Council of State has appointed Dr. Carlos Amat Fores, who held the post of vice minister of justice, as justice minister. He will assume the post vacated by Juan Escalona Rivera, current president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, the country's top government organization.

The new justice minister has also held several posts in the Supreme Tribunal, the Universities of Havana and Santiago de Cuba, and in the Foreign Ministry.

Batista Santana Outlines Fight Against Crime

FL2401220091 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2037 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Division General Sixto Batista Santana, national coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution [CDR], noted in Bayamo, Granma, the systematic nature of the current fight against crime in the country. He asserted that it is not a matter of a temporary campaign inasmuch as: We will be constant and strict. He added that we should create an awareness in the people regarding the magnitude and significance of criminal activities so that they can actively and relentlessly participate in the fight against crime.

During a meeting with Granma CDR leaders, Div. Gen. Batista Santana, who is also alternate member of the Communist Party of Cuba Politburo, said the main problems the revolution is currently facing are the economic limitations and crime. The latter is closely related to the action of the enemies of the Cuban process. Sixto Batista Santana stressed this is why the active participation of all the people—either through the Cuban Workers Federation, Union of Young Communists, or the CDR's—is needed.

German Claims AIDS Virus Created by Pentagon

PA2401213091 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The AIDS virus was created in the central laboratory of the Pentagon for biological warfare, Dr. Jacobo Segal, professor emeritus of the Humboldt University of Berlin, has stated. Segal said that such a theory is supported by many scientists and has not been refuted.

According to the specialist, AIDS is a combination of the animal virus (visna) and the human (htl day). This combination, he said, is not produced naturally, but through gene technology, to permit the attack on human immune cells.

'Kidnapped' Fisherman Recounts 33 Days in U.S.

FL2501025991 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Unattributed report on statements by fisherman Mario Luis Casanova, who was "kidnapped" on 16 December in his own vessel by Nelson Matos and taken to the United States for 33 days, at the MONCADA magazine offices in Havana; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Casanova] He very intelligently—because I was trusting and the fact that I owned a boat and went fishing—made arrangements with me to go fishing several times. He had planned what he was going to do. He put me to sleep. He later told me that he had put diazepam ampoules in a drink. After I fell asleep he took advantage of me. He got close to I do not know which coast. I believe he moved from the area. He took advantage of the fact that I was asleep and picked up the people he took along. All of this happened because of his friendship.

I told the U.S. Coast Guard when we were picked up very close to the shore—it was some 200 meters from the Miami coast—that I did not want to stay, that I had fallen asleep and I wanted to go back. This is when I began to be berated because they did not understand. They said they could not understand how a person who had been blessed by God by being able to make a journey such as that would want to go back to Cuba.

[Reporter] Casanova explained that after 22 days during which the Cuban Interests Office in that country did not about the situation, he decided to go on a hunger strike for five days. This, with the later efforts made by the Cuban consul, made it possible for him to return to our country.

[Casanova] I was in two places. They do not call them cells. They are a sort of closed-in shelter. When I began the hunger strike they thought I could be a dangerous

person and then they transferred me to a smaller shelter. There were demented, crazy people there. I was watched more closely. There was a door and the people who took care of the place were in front of the door. There had to be a way for them to let me out of there. I would have simply left. I was going to be the first Cuban to arrive in Cuba from Miami in an inner tube. I would have thrown myself into the water with my eyes closed even if it meant losing my life. I would have made the journey without knowing what was going to happen. I would have never wanted to stay there. This is why I did everything I did. Perhaps I would have done more.

Some 90,000 Oxen Teams Used in Agriculture

FL2301170091 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1400 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] Orlando Lugo Fonte, president of the ANAP [National Association of Small Farmers], has reported that Cuban peasants are using some 90,000 oxen teams for agricultural work. The agriculture leader said this number increased by some 45,000 teams in the last few months because fuel shortages limit the use of tractors. Lugo Fonte, who is also member of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee, noted that the most outstanding provinces in that area are Sancti Spiritus and Pinar del Rio because the terrain in these provinces is more suitable for the use of animal traction.

Small Fire Reported at Miramar Bus Terminal

FL2501030891 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] A small fire that could have spread occurred at the Miramar urban bus terminal this afternoon. The fire broke out in the area where the main warehouse and part of the administrative building are located. The flames damaged batteries and other spare parts. Joint forces of the Plaza and Playa municipalities commandos put the fire out. No buses were damaged, thanks to the swift action taken by the terminal's workers, who moved the vehicles to safe places. The authorities are investigating the cause of the fire.

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Scientist Discusses Environmental Effects of War

FL2401162091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1425 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By Earl Bousquet]

[Text] Castries, St. Lucia, Jan 24, CANA—A leading Caribbean environmental scientist said the region would suffer minimal direct environmental damage as a result of the Gulf War. Guyana-born Dr. Naresh Singh, executive director of the St. Lucia-based Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), said a lot, however, will depend on the monitoring capacities of national health and environmental institutions after the war.

Participating in a recent radio phone-in programme here, Singh said an indirect consequence of the war which would affect the Caribbean would be a reduced availability of external funding for many sectors that impact on the environment, "especially in the economic sphere, through lack of sufficient aid and financial support such as loans."

Examining fears of nuclear fallout in the region should nuclear weapons be used in the conflict, he said that was near impossible. Such fallout, he said, "would be limited by the long-range distance it would have to travel." He submitted that while the Caribbean occasionally received a sprinkling of Sahara dust, it was because the dust came from western Sahara. On the other hand, nuclear fallout from the Gulf War would have to travel from East Africa, through the Sahara, and across the Atlantic, and by the time it reached the Caribbean, it would be very minimal.

Singh also discounted significant contamination of the Caribbean by the possible resort to chemical warfare. "In order to be effective, such gases would have to be more dense than air, and here, too, the long range of travel to the Caribbean can dilute such gases." The CEHI top scientist said biological warfare in the Gulf could introduce potentially deadly toxins into the air. In addition, he said migratory fish could reach this part of the world through circulation of the vast oceans.

He said the destruction of oil tankers at sea would lead to oil slicks that would largely be localised in the Gulf area. He cited implications for the Caribbean since "...damage to one part of the world's ecosystem eventually means damage to all."

Singh said the region's health and environmental institutions will have to be able to monitor foodstuffs entering the region. "We must recall that after the Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union some years ago, certain Caribbean territories were able to monitor and intercept contaminated foodstuffs imported from Europe," he said. "Therefore, our monitoring capabilities will have to be able to detect the possibility of contaminated food being dumped on unsuspecting developing countries." Singh said cancer societies and other cancer detection agencies in the various territories also would have to sharpen their detection capabilities.

The CEHI executive director said higher oil prices would accelerate several spill-off effects on the region's environment. "Higher oil prices can mean that people who can no longer afford cooking gas may resort to deforestation, which could further our degradation," he said. "Therefore, our emphasis must always be on long-term plans and policies aimed at sustainable development of Caribbean territories."

Caricom Expected To React to Jackson's Rebuke

FL2401173091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1628 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, Jan 24, CANA—Following is the text of the editorial in Thursday's edition of the DAILY NATION.

"The governments of the Caribbean Community [Caricom] are not expected to take kindly to the sharp open rebuke earlier this week from the Reverend Jesse Jackson for their collective backing of the use of force in the Persian Gulf. The influential American politician, who has been consistent in lobbying support in the United States for Caribbean causes, seems angry over the Caricom governments' failure to go beyond their official position of more than five months ago when they simply branded Iraq as an aggressor and demanded its unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.

He has more than implied that if these governments are hoping to win the favour of the United States and its allies in obtaining economic aid in return for their support for the use of force against Iraq, they would be disappointed.

We feel that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August last year was a naked act of aggression, whatever may be the merits of its historical claims to a portion of Kuwait. It is certainly a violation of the norms of international law in the settlement of territorial and economic disputes.

In urging at their 11th summit in Jamaica in August Iraq's unconditional withdrawal from occupied Kuwait, the Caricom governments may simply have been underscoring their own commitment to the resolution of age-old conflicts by peaceful means.

They would not have been unmindful either of the colonially-inherited territorial disputes that two of their own member states—Guyana and Belize—are still seeking to peacefully resolve through negotiations with Venezuela and Guatemala respectively.

Bahamas

Citizens Seek To Join Persian Gulf Forces

FL2401165891 Bridgetown CANA in English 1635 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Nassau, the Bahamas, Jan 24, CANA—Up to 20 Bahamians a day are telephoning the United States Embassy here, seeking to join forces in the Persian Gulf, an embassy official reported.

Mary Reeber, the Embassy's public affairs officer, said that men and women are making inquiries. "This response touched us and, quite frankly, to me it's an indication of the close identification that our two countries have," said Reeber.

"I have also been impressed with the fact that almost everyone I talked to has a friend or relative in the Gulf."

On Tuesday, three Bahamian women arrived at the Embassy in an attempt to sign up for service, Reeber reported. Scores of parents and other relatives have taken photographs and stories of their children, who are involved with the U.S. military, to the local newspapers.

Forged Letter Orders Citizens To Serve in War

FL2401192091 Nassau Domestic Serivce in English 1800 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Excerpt] Here at home, the minister of national security has taken exception to a letter with his forged signature that is calling for Bahamians to serve in the Gulf war. Obie Wilscomb has details.

[Begin recording] Minister Rolle announced as reckless and irresponsible the person or persons who are circulating under his forged signature a phony letter ordering Bahamians to enlistment in a fictitious military unit for compulsory service in the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Rolle said what at first appeared to be a joke or malicious mischief has been taken seriously by some Bahamians and is causing discomfort and distress to some families. He said only an insensitive and truly wicked mind would undertake such an outrageous disinformation campaign against the government. By affixing the official seal of the Bahamas to the document and forging my signature, it is clear, said Mr. Rolle, that the people responsible for circulating this fraudulent document wanted to mislead the public about the seriousness of the conflict and ridicule the government in the process. It doesn't take much imagination, he said, to figure out who would benefit by such a dishonest disinformation campaign.

The minister said the phony document mistakenly listed the Bain [as heard] Building as the address of the Ministry of National Security, when everyone knows that the ministry has been located in the Post Office Building for several years. This should reveal to the public the crudeness of this effort in deception, he said.

Mr. Rolle said the public should know he has no power to order military conscription or compulsory enlistment in any military service. Mr. Rolle added that there is no emergency in the Bahamas, that the military forces we have are adequate to meet the country's needs, and that their role is solely the defense of the Bahamas. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Barbados

Sandiford, Members of Government Sworn In

FL2401190091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1650 GMT 24 Jan 91

[By Reudon Eversley]

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, Jan 24, CANA—Prime Minister Erskine Sandiford was sworn in Thursday for a second term, two days after leading the ruling Democratic Labour

Party (DLP) to victory in general elections. Also taking the oath of office before Governor-General Dame Nita Barrow were Deputy Prime Minister Philip Greaves and senior cabinet ministers Branford Taitt and Maurice King.

Sandiford, speaking to reporters after the brief ceremony, said he was putting the "finishing touches" to his cabinet and the full list of ministers would be announced in a "few days." He declined to state the portfolios being given to Greaves, Taitt, and King.

Besides being deputy prime minister in the last government, Greaves held the portfolios of transport, works, international transport, telecommunications, and immigration. Taitt was health minister and King attorney-general and minister of foreign affairs. Press reports Wednesday said Sandiford indicated on Tuesday that King would retain foreign affairs.

Sandiford announced the new attorney-general would no longer have responsibilities for such areas as the police and prison service which are being placed under a new ministry. He declined to say if this new ministry will be styled Ministry of Home Affairs.

The DLP was re-elected Tuesday for a second five-year with a slightly reduced 18-10 parliamentary majority. Sandiford said one of the first tasks of his cabinet will be to assess the condition of the economy in light of the Gulf war and "take whatever steps may be required in order to keep our country moving." He said the priorities of his administration were the maintenance of a sound economy and the promotion of economic justice through programmes and policies aimed at expanding ownership.

Haiti

Trouillot Letter Tells Cabinet To Follow Law

FL2501022091 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] Provisional President Mrs. Ertha Pascal Trouillot, in a letter to her ministers dated 11 January, instructed them to act in accordance with the law. According to this letter, they do not have to deal with the State Council but only with a team set up by President-Elect Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Yesterday, we received a copy of this 11 January letter, which we will now read.

Mrs. Trouillot wrote that it is important for her to first of all point out that on 14 August 1990, the State Council spoke of its right to veto and declared that it dissociated itself and stood apart from the executive power. She notes that the State Council also invited the people to a rache manyok operation [popular uprising and demonstrations in an attempt to overthrow the government]. The provisional government, faithful to the mission it was assigned and to the commitment it took before the people and the international community, and despite the fact some people waived their responsibilities, kept its promise in realizing the 16 December general elections under the best possible conditions.

In a 3 January communique, published on page seven of the 4 January edition of the L'UNION, the State Council stated that it was time, following the 16 December elections, to remind concerned people in Haiti and abroad as well as international bodies that, according to the 4 March 1990 Agreement Protocol, all statutory orders, contracts, conventions, and agreements that bind them to the government must be approved by the State Council so as to avoid getting in trouble with the definitive government.

Mrs. Trouillot continues by writing that, regardless of the grave consequences such declarations can have on the evolution of the political situation in Haiti, it is useful to point out that the Constitution and the laws of the country define the procedures that allow the officials to make sure that the government's acts, decisions, and steps are in compliance with the rules for administration and management of state affairs. She also notes that in the area concerned, any institution or body has legal competency. [sentence as heard] It is only the Constitution and the laws of the country that say what must be done. No other institution or body can go beyond the law. Laws dictate what must be done. She points out that failure to consult the State Council or to get its approval cannot make the acts and decisions of the provisional government null and void. The provisional government can make decisions even if it does not obtain the State Council's approval. Contrary to what the State Council thinks, once the government has made a decision, the decision is binding according to the law. It is the understanding of very important principles like these that should have been taken into consideration in the letters Dr. Louis Roy sent directly to the ministerial cabinet in the name of the State Council, which has decided unilaterally and without any previous agreement to participate in the period of transition and preparation for the transfer of power on 7 February.

Mrs. Trouillot continues by noting that as provisional president of the country who has taken her responsibility through to the 16 December elections: In a spirit of dialogue and opening, I have accepted that the ministers of the provisional government meet with the president-elect's representatives to establish the necessary documents for the democratic transition of power. I have not changed my opinion and I maintain my decision to organize these meetings together to analyze and take care of numerous dossiers that are important to both the team of the president-elect and the provisional president. I am asking you, Messrs. Ministers, to meet only with the delegates appointed by the president-elect. These are some remarks I think I must make concerning the State Council communique issued on 3 January.

This is what Mrs. Trouillot wrote before adding that at this important time in the Haitian people's life, the political power that continues to manage affairs

throughout the country must be managed under the best possible conditions until 7 February, a date the provisional government is impatiently anticipating so that finally, as all patriots in the country wish, another period of national history can begin for all Haitian people.

In conclusion, Mrs. Trouillot wrote that she is convinced that her ministers will share this same faith and confidence in the greatness of Haiti, in the greatness of the nation.

Panpra Leader Serge Gilles Defeated in Election

FL2401211091 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] Serge Gilles, the man who was indicated to be the future prime minister of the new Haitian Congress, lost in the runoff elections on 20 January. In view of this, Gilles, leader of the National and Progressive Revolutionary Party of Haiti [Panpra] and a People's National Assembly member, has lost every hope of winning a seat in the Senate.

Serge Gilles ran in the runoff elections held in the Central Department—a Panpra stronghold—and lost to the National Front for Change and Democracy [FNCD] candidates. Based on votes from 626 Departmental Electoral Bureaus, three FNCD candidates—Herard Pollo, Roger Eddy Sajoux, and Smith Metellus—came in first, second, and third place respectively; Serge Gilles came in fourth; and Marineau Etienne, a National Agricultural and Industrial Party candidate, came in fifth.

BED's Publish Election Results

FL2401223591 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The Departmental Electoral Bureaus [BED's] continue to issue the results of 20 January elections. The following were elected on the second ballot:

Center Department

Senators: Herard Pauyo, National Front For Change and Democracy [FNCD]; Roger Sajous, FNCD; Smith Metellus, FNCD.

Deputies: Max Duckens Desrosiers, FNCD; Raoul Kessa [name as heard], National Agricultural and Industrial Party; Israel Appollon, FNCD.

Southeast Department:

Senators: Jean-Robert Martinez, FNCD, 75,641 votes; Alberto Joseph, FNCD, 57,254 votes; Guy Beauduy, independent, 53,627.

Deputies: Joseph Lambert in first Jacmel District, 11,455 votes; Marie Junie Creve-Coeur in first Belle-Anse District, 5,238 votes; Lamarre Maxo, FNCD, in second Belle-Anse District, 6,790 votes; Jonas Louis, Haitian Christian Democratic Party, in third Cayes-Jamel District, 14,091 votes; Paris Moise, Mobilization for National Development, in Cotes-de-Fer [number of votes not given]; Nillan Jean-Louis, National Alliance for Democracy and Progress, in first Bainet District [number of votes not given]; Joseph Elica Bommier, FNCD, in second Jacmel District [number of votes not given].

Investigation Links Military to Clash, Killings

FL2401174091 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] An investigation ordered by Haitian President-Elect Jean Bertrand Aristide has concluded that soldiers from the Saint-Marc Military District were involved in an incident on 17 January in which 12 people were killed and 400 houses were burned. The authorities have also reported that eight people are missing.

The incident occurred at the (?Tercase) Ranch, located 100 km north of Port-au-Prince. Clashes ensued when two aides of the rural police chief, who were sent to inspect a rice deposit, were killed. The Haitian press has reported that several people, who were escorted by military personnel, arrived at the scene later and proceeded to carry out the killings with guns and machetes. The spark that set off this tragedy was a clash between landless peasants and police.

El Salvador

FMLN Blames Army for Ayutuxtepeque Massacre

PA2401222191 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] High Command has blamed the Armed Forces and Civil Defense authorities for the murder of 15 peasants on the evening of 21 January in El Zapote, Ayutuxtepeque.

In a communique issued in Mexico today, the FMLN said that actions like these are merely intended to intimidate the population in view of the growing acceptance of the opposition parties during the current electoral campaign and the progress of negotiations. The rebels have pointed out that the murders were encouraged by the approval of the remaining U.S. military aid to the Armed Forces, and were carried out now that world attention is focused on the Persian Gulf war.

The government reacted with great dismay to the multiple crime committed in Ayutuxtepeque, and ordered an in-depth investigation.

In an official bulletin, the government expressed sorrow for the killings and described them as a deplorable massacre of civilians, including women, children, and the elderly.

The communique also extended government condolences to the victims' relatives and the government promise to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Authorities Reject FMLN Plans To Try Rebels

PA2401142791 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] The government has rejected the guerrillas' statement, in which they said they will try—using their own methods—two members who have been accused of participating in the murder of two U.S. citizens that occurred in San Miguel on 2 January.

A government communique said that the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] is an irregular group that lacks the juridical and moral authority to try the accused.

The note said that President Alfredo Cristiani's administration feels that any alleged trial—and the subsequent sentencing of the accused—would represent a violation of the involved people's human rights.

The note added that the FMLN is not, and could never become, the threat it claims be. It said that the government has continued the peace talks for humanitarian reasons so that the FMLN may join the country's democratic life.

Justice Minister To Become Presidency Minister

PA2401204791 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1730 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Excerpt] Justice Minister Oscar Santamaria has officially announced his separation from the Justice Ministry and expressed satisfaction with the work accomplished during his tenure.

Santamaria also mentioned the implementation of plans to improve the administration of justice. Those plans call for substantial improvements in public registry of real estate property with the introduction of a computerized system.

Santamaria—who will become minister of the presidency on 28 January—said that this project and the [word indistinct] program for Salvadoran laws will be effective in April. According to Santamaria, the latter will permit the elimination of [word indistinct] laws.

Santamaria also announced the implementation of changes in the penitentiary system, such as improving the rehabilitation program for the inmates. [passage omitted]

Guatemala

'Unidentified Individuals' Fire on UN Mission

PA2401164291 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1544 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Guatemala City, 24 Jan (ACAN-EFE)—Official sources have reported that a group of unidentified individuals fired on the UN headquarters in Guatemala early this morning without causing any injuries to anyone. One of the bullets passed through a glass window of the diplomatic mission, but did not injure anyone because the attack was carried out in the early morning hours.

Security forces have began an investigation to determine the origin of the attack. Meanwhile, a UN official said she had no further details on the incident. Until now, no clandestine group operating in Guatemala has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Yesterday, members of the National Police and the Fire Department were sent to the "Emisoras Unidas" radio station because of a bomb threat which turned out to be false. A bomb exploded at that radio station over the past weekend, without injuring anyone.

Firemen were also sent yesterday to the Uruguayan Embassy where a bomb had supposedly been planted. According to sources from that embassy, however, after a thorough search it was determined that this was another false alarm.

URNG Claims Responsibility for Attacks

PA2401173691 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 20 Jan 91 p 2

[Text] The CERIGUA news agency has reported that URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity]

members have claimed responsibility for destroying computer equipment, destroying electric and air control towers, and inflicting 10 casualties on the Army in the last 10 days during terrorist attacks in Huehuetenango, Quiche, and Peten Departments.

The source adds that in the San Luis Peten municipality, rebels destroyed an air control tower and partially damaged an electricity pylon in the local garrison on 10 January. During this attack, the guerrillas also destroyed three pieces of communication equipment and three power generators.

CERIGUA states that on 10 January, other rebels ambushed two squads from the San Luis garrison, inflicting four casualties. The rebels also placed barricades on the road to Poptun.

The report states that the terrorists placed two barricades and destroyed two energy pylons on the road of the North Transversal Strip (Franja Transversal del Norte), in Sayaxche and San Luis municipalities, in Peten Department.

The report says that on 11 January the rebels inflicted another four casualties during an ambush on an Army column in the Lo Veremos hamlet. The rebels also attacked another column that was allegedly destroying crops at the San Roman River delta in Sayaxche.

The rebels also report that, earlier, the URNG had attacked an outpost and partially destroyed a petroleum refinery in Poptun and La Libertad.

In conclusion, the source reports that guerrillas inflicted two more casualties on the Army during an attack on the Amachel Garrison in Quiche Department and occupied stretches of the Pueblo Nuevo and North Transversal Strip roads in Huehuetenango, where they held political meetings and distributed pamphlets.

Editorial Hits Serrano's Approach to Crisis

PA2401143391 Guatemala City SIGLO VENTIUNO in Spanish 23 Jan 91 p 8

[Editorial: "Cabinet Enlightens"]

[Text] President Serrano's cabinet concluded a long session with the surprise finding that "Guatemala is bankrupt."

That is really fresh news they have given us. For the past 12 months, representatives from all the social sectors and pressure groups have been constantly saying that Guatemala is facing the most acute and unprecendented crisis in its history. It has record inflation, a weak quetzal, and monetary problems that have increased poverty and have caused the gradual extinction of the middle class.

In fact, the desperate voices that have been reporting the "officially undeclared" crisis have supported their argument with objective information and indicators that allow us to size up the country's serious economic problems as well as visualize the magnitude of the fiscal and monetary efforts needed to firmly stabilize our economy.

Despite the date, aside from becoming enlightened, the government has done nothing to supply information to help the people realize the magnitude of the crisis and—even less so—the amount of shared sacrifices we Guatemalans will have to make to fix our economy.

The wise government report represents simplicity and improvisation, dashes the people's high hopes, and generates a feeling of continuity with past government policies.

We expect more from the young, aggressive, and experienced cabinet we have. Far from complaints and cries pointing to isolated problems with partial solutions and impromptu policies, Guatemalans want to see and hear about the priorities, goals, government programs, calendar of activities, and a complete package of policies that are consistent, congruent, and basically coexistent.

To state at this stage of the game that Guatemala is bankrupt is to state a fact that even children know. They have suffered from it. The government team has the ball in its court. The people facing them are full of expectations and unfulfilled demands, despite all their frustrations.

Nicaragua

Budget Problems To Affect Soviet Medical Team

PA2501012891 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 23 Jan 91 p 20

[Text] The Chinandega Hospital's Soviet medical brigade will be withdrawn within the next few days because the Health Ministry does not have the funds to cover their salaries. These salaries were established by the previous administration at over $1,000 per month.

Dr. Douglas Soza, National Director of Medical Attention, explained that 150 Cuban doctors are reinforcing the country's health care and they, unlike the Soviet doctors, "do not represent much expense; the Cuban doctors' expenses are minimal for the Health Ministry, because their aid is goodwill."

The Soviets' positions will be offered to Nicaraguan specialists who will be graduating next quarter, Soza said.

An agreement signed in 1988 between the USSR and Nicaraguan Governments called for the USSR to grant Nicaragua a loan that has served to maintain monthly salaries ranging between 800 to 1,500 rubles, a currency equal to the U.S. dollar, the official added.

Reportage on Daniel Ortega's Visit to Moscow

WA2401040291

For reportage on former President Daniel Ortega's visit to Moscow, including talks with Politburo official Alexandr Dzasokhov, see the Latin America & Caribbean section of the 24 January Soviet Union DAILY REPORT.

Panama

Security Increased To Protect Oil Pipeline

PA2401201291 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 24 Jan 91 p 41

[Text] Chiriqui Legislator Ramon Aizpurua has told EL SIGLO that strict security measures have been implemented at the Chiriqui-Bocas del Toro oil pipeline and the facilities of Petro Terminal to prevent a terrorist attack like the one that occurred in Colombia a few days ago.

Aizpurua said that following an attack on an oil pipeline in Colombia that caused extensive property damage, additional security measures were adopted in Puerto Armuelles and areas connecting the Chiriqui-Bocas del Toro oil pipeline to prevent a similar attack on those facilities.

According to Aizpurua, "The security measures implemented to protect the oil pipeline are very good, particularly in areas like Limones, Bella Vista, and the Costa Rican border, where internal security is provided by a an excellent security agency in coordination with the Public Force."

He added that several checkpoints have been installed at Petro Terminal, where specialized personnel inspect everyone entering that company's main facilities.

Aizpurua said that the area where Petro Terminal is located is liable to suffer a terrorist attack that not only could endanger the company, but the entire district of Baru and areas close to the oil pipeline. "There has been no incident so far and we hope that God will protect us and that no tragic incidents will occur," Aizpurua concluded.

Arab Arrested During Anti-Terrorist Operation

PA2301172291 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 23 Jan 91 p 15

[Report by correspondent G. de la Rosa]

[Text] Colon—A crowd that was gathered in front of the Carlton Hotel at 10th Street and Melendez Avenue caught our attention on the morning of 17 January. There were rumors about an operation to locate drugs and also about an alleged murder in one of the hotel rooms. he case turned out to be quite different, however. We have unofficially learned that it was an "antiterrorist" operation carried out by security agents of the U.S. Army and the PTJ [Judicial Technical Police].

The purpose of the operation was to locate three Arabs who had been seen in a rented car that was left abandoned near the hotel. They were believed to be members of a terrorist group scattered about the American continent to carry out terrorist actions against military facilities or directly against specific individuals.

The operation was successful, as the PTJ and U.S. Army managed to arrest an Arab who was in one of the hotel rooms. The suspect is currently under investigation.

Arab Group Hits U.S.; Defends Iraq's Husayn

PA2501041391 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 24 Jan 91 p 33

[Communique issued by the Panamanian-Arab Cultural Institute in Panama City—dated "January"]

[Text] The Panamanian-Arab Cultural Institute, in view of developments in the Persian Gulf region, expresses its formal repudiation of the war, which represents an act of savagery contrary to the norms of civilized peoples. Upon authorizing the use of force in the Gulf, the UN Security Council unleashed a bloody struggle that will have catastrophic consequences for humankind. The government of President Bush has drawn the United Nations, created after World War II to ensure peace among nations, into promoting a catastrophe of large and devastating proportions under the pretext of forcing the Iraqi president to withdraw his troops from Kuwait to reinstate the authority of the deposed amir. The UN Security Council, however, has never forced the Zionist state to withdraw its occupying troops from the Arab territories in the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank in open defiance of the order of the UN Security Council in 1967. This represents a clear act of hypocrisy by those who voted in the UN Security Council for the use of force and the governments supporting President Bush in an alleged punitive expedition—the pretense for the benefit of the rest of humankind, that the so-called allies only want to return Kuwait to its legitimate ruler. While the United States, without consulting with the UN Security Council, invaded Panama to install a democratic government that had been elected in the 1989 elections, it is now trying to invade Kuwait to install a petty antidemocratic and anachronistic king, in a country where elections have never been held. This is an enormous paradox of history.

The Panamanian-Arab Cultural Institute rejects the disrespectful manner in which some Panamanian personalities have been referring to the head of state of a country who deserves as much respect as the officials of our country.

We, the members of the Panamanian-Arab Cultural Institute, express our solidarity with the Arab people of Iraq and the civilian population which will suffer deaths as the result of continuous bombing. In addition, we express our sympathy and fraternal solidarity with the Palestinian people, who have been deprived of their right to live in their fatherland by the Zionist state, whose injustices are today being protected by the most powerful nation on the planet on which we live.

Panama, January 1991

For the Panamanian-Arab Cultural Institute

Carlos A. Perez Herrera, president

Gilberto Barrera, secretary

Argentina

Menem Calls Israel's Shamir, Offers Support

PY2401140091 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1303 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Jan (TELAM)—Today President Carlos Menem telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to express his country's solidarity with the Israeli people and to congratulate Shamir on the wise and prudent attitude the Israeli Government and people have taken toward the aggression of the tyrant, Saddam Husayn.

During the phone conversation held at 0900, Menem told Shamir: I want you to know that, no matter what attitude Israel may adopt, Argentina will support the Israeli people.

Shamir also congratulated the Argentine Government and people on their courageous and firm attitude on the Gulf conflict.

Shamir concluded by telling Menem: The pro-Israel voice that you raise in the international arena has special importance for us.

Menem Cancels European Trip for Security Reasons

PY2501014491 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2330 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 24 Jan (TELAM)—Presidential spokesman Humberto Toledo reported tonight that President Carlos Menem has suspended his trip to Switzerland, which was scheduled for next week, due to security reasons.

The official told TELAM that the chief of state made the decision in response to a suggestion from the cabinet and in light of the situation in the Persian Gulf. [passage omitted]

Corvette Set To Replace Vessel Already in Gulf

PY2401224591 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2155 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Jan (NA)—Defense Minister Guido di Tella reported today that within 30 days the corvette "Rosales" will be sent to the Persian Gulf to replace one of the two vessels already in the conflict zone.

The "Rosales" will provide logistic support to repair and hospital vessels and tankers, Di Tella said. The minister stated that the logistic support to be provided by the vessel "does not imply combat operations."

Menem Lauds Congress' Vote Authorizing Ships

PY2401125491 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1113 GMT 25 Jan 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Jan (TELAM)—President Carlos Menem said today that Congress, by authorizing Argentine ships to provided logistical support to the multinational force in the Persian Gulf, has echoed not only the thinking of our people but also the global outcry to once and for all get rid of a tyrant.

In remarks to Radio Mitre, Menem said that because of his methods and because of what he is doing the tyrant who rose in that part of the world has had few predecessors, but Hitler was one of them.

3 Caught Photographing 'Strategic Installations'

PY2401181091 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1715 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Bahia Blanca, 24 Jan (TELAM)—Three suspects, who violated security measures, have been arrested with film of strategic installations. The suspects have been turned over to federal court authorities.

During a broad security operation that was instituted across our country in the wake of the outbreak of war in the Persian Gulf, fifth police district personnel arrested three individuals whose identities were not revealed.

The three suspects had film with shots of installations of the 5th Army Corps, the state gas company, the Bahia Blanca petrochemical complex, ports, and the National University of the South. The suspects were being questioned by Federal Judge Luis Balaguer at noon today.

Criminal Charges Against Three Officers Dropped

PY2401181691 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1234 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Jan (NA)—Colonel Felix Isla Rodriguez, spokesman for the Armed Forces Supreme Council, has reported that Captains Miguel Santucho Saravia and Ricardo Muller, and First Lieutenant Eduardo Rodriguez, were released after testifying before the Armed Forces Supreme Council, although they will remain at the disposal of the Military Courts.

He pointed out: "The decision complies with Article 316 of the Military Code of Justice."

Col. Rodriguez explained that criminal charges against the officers were dismissed although "Army discliplinary measures have not been ruled out."

Brazil

Avibras Still Assisting Iraqis With Astros-2

PY2401221091 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 24 Jan 91 p 22

[Luiz Augusto Michelazzo report]

[Text] Sao Paulo—Joao Verdi, director-president of Avibras [Avibras Aerospace Industry, Inc.], reported yesterday that the enterprise—Brazil's largest weapons manufacturer and exporter—is still providing technical information to the Iraqi Army and is helping to solve maintenance and function problems with the Astros-2 multiple-rocket launcher and FILA [fighting intruders at low altitude] radars—used to guide antiaircraft fire—which have been imported by Saddam Husayn since 1986.

According to Verdi, these are routine consultations between purchasers and manufacturers of war materiel which are included in the contracts. These contracts are still valid even in the event of war, forcing the enterprise to supply technical assistance for 10 years.

The Avibras president reported that the latest consultations by the Iraqi military officers, made after the war broke out, had to do with difficulties in making connections in one of the circuits of the Astros-2 rocket launcher. The Iraqi Army has 560 of these launcher units while the allies have 160, purchased by Saudi Arabia.

Verdi believes that the Astros-2, recognized by experts as one of the most sophisticated and effective weapons of its kind, will be used by the two sides beginning next week in antitank military actions and artillery duels. According to Verdi, the Astros-2 is much more effective and deadly than the MRLS (Multiple Rocket Launcher System) [preceding four words in English] used by the U.S. artillery because of its greater speed, range, and capacity for saturation and destruction. Moreover, the Astros-2 can operate with three types of missiles and is capable of effectively reaching targets up to 60 km away.

In addition to Avibras, other Brazilian manufacturers of military materiel, such as Embraer [Brazilian Aeronautics Company] and Engesa [Specialized Engineers, Inc.], began to export tremendous amounts of weapons to the Middle East in 1970, with exports totaling $6 billion in 1986.

Avibras' most recent sales to Saddam Husayn were made three years ago, at which time he failed to pay a debt of $45 million.

Dauster Reports on Debt Negotiations in U.S.

PY2401132091 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 23 Jan 91 p 23

[Text] Brasilia—There was an important development in the negotiations between Brazil and the creditor banks last weekend in New York. Ambassador Jorio Dauster, official debt negotiator, returned from the United States on 20 January to report to Economy Minister Zelia Cardoso de Mello on the progress in the latest meetings with the Creditor Banks Advisory Committee: The banks have proposed the reduction of the interest payments due between 1991 and 1993 from $7.7 billion to $5.7 billion. They also proposed that the $2-billion difference be included in the payments to be made after 1993.

Although he believes that the proposal has already moved a step forward, Dauster said that it still does not meet the country's needs. From 1991 to 1993, Brazil is ready to pay $2.4 billion in interest: $1.2 billion in cash and the remaining in bonds. In response to the new proposal, Dauster suggested modifications that he termed "conceptual." These modifications alter the method of paying the $2.4 billion, but do not modify the amount to be paid.

Dauster hopes to return to New York before 15 February to resume discussions with the private banks. He explained that the Gulf war is not interfering with the negotiations. He said that the Brazilian Government representatives and the bankers naturally take into consideration the consequences the conflict may have on the economy, although they are currently engaged in solving at least the problem of the interest that has become due.

Dauster said that Brazil is managing to overcome foreign trade financing difficulties. He added that although some foreign banks have stopped offering credit for our exports, others—most of them European banks—have opened new credit lines over the last few months. Dauster said he still cannot report on the amount of these new credits.

Colombia

EPL, Quintin Lame Commandos Support Pardon Law

PA2401161791 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 2 in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] The EPL [Popular Liberation Army] and the Quintin Lame Commando Unit today confirmed their wishes to stop fighting in hopes of attaining peace in Colombia. Their spokesmen were in Bogota and Popayan for the "Noticiero de las Siete" newscast. The EPL immediately responded to the new pardon decree—which was approved yesterday by the government for the PRT [Revolutionary Workers Party], the Quintin Lame Commando Unit, and the EPL—by handing over a list of 85 men. For the EPL, the decree constitutes a specific sign of the government's commitment to peace, although they wish the decree was more far-reaching and covered other sectors.

[Begin recording of unidentified guerrilla] We want the release of political prisoners. We also hope that the guerrillas who have been fighting for so long will find the

correct path and be given guarantees so that they can engage in different political activities. [end recording]

Following eight months of negotiations, the EPL hopes to forsake 25 years of guerrilla activities to become consolidated as a political movement. In Popayan, the Quintin Lame Commando Unit supports the pardon law, although it is unlikely that it will lay down its weapons in the near future.

[Begin recording of guerrilla] The delay has not been our fault, and we have not been reluctant to reach an agreement. The government is to be blamed for this, perhaps because it was involved in the peace process with the EPL—which required more time—and the PRT. [end recording]

The Quintin Lame Commmando Unit wants to become an Indian defense group and wishes to participate in the constitutent assembly with the power to speak out and vote on the issues.

16 Soldiers Returned; Government Reaffirms Stand

PA2401152291 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Although these images show the FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] handing over 15 soldiers and one noncommissioned officer to officials of the Advisory Board for Peace Issues, the government has warned that there will be no change in its strategy of talks with armed rebel groups. Nevertheless, many sectors see this action as the first sign of rapprochement between the FARC and the government to establish new contacts following the Army's takeover of Casa Verde, in La Uribe, on 9 December.

At a news conference today, the national security adviser [name not given] denied that the guerrilla's terrorist actions had resurged following the attack in La Uribe.

[Begin recording] [Adviser] We are experiencing public order disturbances—some of which are relatively serious—but we cannot use the term war to describe them, as some have wanted to. [end recording]

He added that, examining the statistics on guerrilla actions prior to 9 December, one can conclude that there is no war situation. He warned that rebels have until 15 March to lay down their weapons and actively participate in the National Constitutent Assembly. The adviser may be implying that, since there is no guerrilla offensive, the talks can be held. If that is so, the rapprochement between the two is clear.

Stations Report 18-23 Jan Guerrilla Activities

PA2401150791

[Editorial Report] Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish at 0000 GMT on 23 January reports that some 180 members of the National Guerrilla Coordinating Board attacked a stretch of the Colombian oil pipeline between Vascona and Covenas on 22 January, harangued some 300 workers, and set fire to 26 vehicles as well as tractors and heavy equipment. The report adds that in a similar attack on 18 January, in Saragoza municipality, over 40 pieces of heavy equipment were set on fire by members of the Army of National Liberation. On the same day, according to the report, three French engineers were kidnapped and the chief of security of a French consortium was killed. The report states in closing that it will be at least six months before construction can be resumed on the damaged stretch of pipeline.

Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 2 in Spanish at 0000 GMT on 24 January reports that losses due to recent guerrilla activity in the northeastern part of Antioquia Department total over 20 billion pesos. The report states that in a special meeting on 23 January, military commanders assigned to the area decided to increase the military presence in the area and establish additional roadblocks to forestall constant guerrilla attacks directed at the French company that is building the country's oil pipeline. The report states that over 17 billion pesos in losses were sustained when guerrillas burned some of the company's heavy equipment on 18 January.

Ecuador

Borja Confused by Iraq's 'Lack of Response'

PA2501041991 Quito Radio Quito in Spanish 2300 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] President Rodrigo Borja has said that the Persian Gulf conflict must be judged by militarily strategists, not others. We must judge other factors and elements, setting aside military matters, he said.

[Begin recording] [Borja] With regard to military strategists, neither the tactics nor the strategies used by the allies or Iraq are clear. I cannot understand Iraq's lack of response. It makes no sense to me for Iraq to take all the strikes and have its entire infrastructure destroyed before striking back. We do not, however, have the complete picture, which would enable us to evaluate the situation. I repeat, the Persian Gulf's military situation must be judged by strategists. We are left the task of judging other factors and elements in the conflict, not the military aspect.

[Unidentified reporter] Is the prolongation of the war already affecting the country?

[Borja] As I said the other day, it will not have a dramatic effect, and time will tell. Obviously, my guess is that the price of oil will rise. This will mean that Ecuador will have greater income. This, however, will be offset by imported inflation. In other words, goods and services that we import for our development will cost more. While we will earn more from oil—even though the wave of triumph has lowered oil prices, I believe this will pick up—we will naturally have higher expenditures—

although not proportional to the earnings—due to the goods and services we must import. [end recording]

In another turn of events, the president confirmed his trip to France in February.

Venezuela

Armed Forces Reinforce Border, Oil Area Patrols

PA2501010291 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1538 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Caracas, 24 Jan (DPA)—Troops of the Venezuelan Armed Forces have been dispatched to the Colombian border in what the military authorities have described as a measure to reinforce surveillance of the western oil-rich area.

According to today's local press, which quotes a military spokesman from the western city of San Cristobal, about 700 km east of Caracas, the additional troop deployment is intended to prevent situations that may endanger national sovereignty.

Spokesmen for the Tachira State 2d Infantry Division said that the San Antonio, Urena, Boca de Grita, Cutufi, Guasdualito, La Victoria, and El Amparo border outposts were reinforced.

The measures, the information adds, are part of a special Defense Ministry security plan for the entire country intended to protect basic industries in case of attack as a consequence of the Persian Gulf war.

Most of the country's oil riches are located in the western area, in the Lake Maracaibo basin. Security organizations have stepped up surveillance over the past few weeks as a preventive measure against possible attacks on oil installations.

The Gulf of Venezuela, north of Lake Maracaibo, is the main exit point for Venezuelan oil. The demarcation of gulf marine and submarine areas is under dispute with Colombia.

Iranian Group Calls For Iraqi, Allied Withdrawal

PA2401180591 Caracas Venezolana de Television Cadena 8 in Spanish 0000 GMT 24 Jan 91

[Text] Members of a parliamentarian group from the Islamic Republic of Iran who are visiting Venezuela have stated that their country's position regarding the Persian Gulf conflict is to support an immediate withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. They said that this must take place together with a simultaneous withdrawal of the allied forces headed by the United States.

The Iranian delegation was welcomed by Energy and Mines Minister Celestino Armas. He described the meeting as very important, because of the historic nature of the war and the possible repercussions that the Middle East conflict could have on the international oil market.

We must recall that Iran and Venezuela are founders of OPEC, whose fate after the war is under discussion because the United States could assume control of the hydrocarbon market.

In defending the position of this international petroleum organization, (Mohammad Faso), head of the Iranian parliamentarian delegation, said that OPEC's dissolution is not advisable for anyone.

[Begin Armas recording] Iran supports and defends OPEC because, like Venezuela, it believes that this organization not only helps ensure market stabilization, but also guarantees just revenues for oil-producing countries. [end recording]

This delegation will be in the country for two days to make political and technical contacts. Speaking in Farsi, the native tongue of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranians promised to hold a news conference on 24 January to provide details on the war, which is the focus of world attention.

President Perez Swears In Four New Ministers

PA2401162191 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 0000 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] President Carlos Andres Perez today swore in four new cabinet ministers at the Hall of Mirrors in the Miraflores Palace. The new ministers are: Pedro Paez Camargo, new health and social welfare minister; Enrique Rivas Gomez, new minister in charge of the Commission Against the Illegal Use of Drugs; Alfonso Jose Linares, president of the Urban Development Fund; and Celia Marquez de Viet, president of the INAM [National Institute for Youth].

The new ministers were interviewed after the swearing-in ceremony.

[Begin recording] [Paez Camargo] I am the first to admit that the health situation in the country merits immediate and strict planning to help solve the great problems that the people are facing. We are ready to do this as soon as possible. Once we have specific plans ready, we will let you know. For the time being, we are in an analysis stage.

[Linares] This is the year of the housing policy in Venezuela. This year we will see the results of the Housing Law that went into effect last year. The Fondur [Urban Development Fund] has an allotment of six billion bolivars, and together with the Inavi [National Housing Institute] which has $12 billion bolivars, I believe that we will see the results of that policy this year.

[Rivas Gomez] I am greatly concerned about treatment and rehabilitation programs because of our limited budget. I do not know exactly how large the budget is, but it is not too large. We must resort to the ministry, state enterpises, and private institutions to start our programs. [end recording]

The new ministers agreed that they want to start by learning about the basic problems in their corresponding institutions before announcing plans and programs.

Guyana

IMF-Monitored Public Service Reform Planned

FL2301175391 Bridgetown CANA in English 1620 GMT 23 Jan 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Jan 23, CANA—The Guyana Government has announced that a proposed public service reform programme, to cut out wastage and improve efficiency, will begin next week. Under a technical assistance programme, a British firm was invited more than a year ago to review Guyana's top-heavy public service and in a set of recommendations, the consultants said that the re-organisation should take place by May this year.

The British company Peat Marwick McClintock last month proposed that the government slash the number of ministries from 18 to 11 and has sent a team back here to help look after the implementation.

A task force will be established to oversee the preparation of plans to implement the structural, organisation, and physical changes of the new ministries, the government's public information agency said. The team will report to President Desmond Hoyte through public service minister, Dr. Faith Harding, and will be made up of ten permanent secretaries, the managing consultant of the British firm, and an official from the presidential secretariat.

Under the reform programme, the office of the president will absorb the Public Service Ministry; the Ministry of Physical and Regional Development will accommodate the Communications and Works Ministry and the relevant agencies responsible for water, housing, and similar services. Other ministries were broadened to encompass others, along with government agencies.

Peat Marwick McClintock, in its 250 recommendations, had also listed low salaries as a problem in the public service, which ultimately led to a drain of skilled personnel to the private sector and its more attractive pay scales. The firm had said that the public service was fragmented, with several ministries having responsibilities in similar areas of government policy. This resulted in a loss of coherence in policy formation, fueled duplication, and overlapping of tasks caused excessive inter-ministry coordination and slow response times in decision-making.

President Desmond Hoyte has promised substantial increases in salaries in the national budget being presented before month end. Staff training and development, complemented with institutional strengthening of the ministries, will be phase two of this project. The restructuring is part of an International Monetary Fund (IMF)-monitored programme and is expected to lead to retrenchment.